

December's Diversity Message:

"December has not been designated a special heritage month, it does contain celebratory days that are recognized internationally. On December 10 in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The document set forth the basic civil standard of economic, political, and social rights that should be guaranteed to every person. Each December, the commitment to this universal document of rights is renewed and celebrated. In addition, the United Nations has established December 3 as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This international observance was established to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also aims to foster awareness of the importance of integrating persons with disabilities into every aspect of life." (1)

There are six recognized types of disability:

1. A **physical or motor disability** is one in which there's a total or partial decrease in mobility in one or more members of the body.
2. **Sensory disability** refers to the impairment of one or more senses.
3. **Intellectual disability** occurs when a person has difficulties or limitations in their cognitive abilities.
4. A **psychosocial disability** occurs when there are impairments in thinking, feeling, or relating to others.
5. A **visceral disability** refers to cases in which a person has deficiencies in the functioning of an internal organ.
6. **Multiple disabilities** refer to cases in which two or more disabilities are present simultaneously.

"The history of disabled aviators goes back almost as far as aviation itself.

Sir Douglas Bader

In 1992, RAF pilot Tim Ellison was involved in a flying accident when his Harrier jet suffered engine failure. The accident left Tim paraplegic. In 1993 he co-founded the British Disabled Flying Association because his passion for flying made him determined to continue flying despite his disability, and to ensure that others could do the same. In 1994 Tim gained his FAA commercial flying licenses and worked as a forest fire fighting pilot until, in 1997 he became the first paraplegic in the world to gain an FAA Airline Transport Pilot's license. In 2001 he competed in the London to Sydney air race finishing first in class and second overall.

I hope that Tim's story encourages people with a disability to realise that anything is possible, in life and in flying!" (2)

(1) diversitycentral.com

(2) freedomintheair.org